

communication types and numbers may be regulated by the profile. In yet further embodiments, a combination of both group and individual profiles may be utilized by the central status device 202.

[0045] The match module 314 determines a match based on the communication type of the inbound communication, availability of agents 104 based on their communication statuses, and applicability of the inbound communication to the agents 104 based on corresponding profiles. The match process may comprise a cross-correlation of the availability of the agent 104 and the applicability of an agent 104 to determine one or more appropriate agents 104 to forward an inbound communication to. Additionally, a master rule set or policy may be stored or associated with profiles which provide a routing priority if more than one agent is available and applicable to receiving the inbound communication. An exemplary embodiment of this determination process is discussed in more detail in connection with FIG. 6.

[0046] In some embodiments, the match module 314 will take into consideration preferences stored in the profile database 320. For example, while the agent 104 may be available for voice calls, e-mail messages, and chat messages, the agent 104 may prefer to only respond to e-mail and chat messages between the hours of 11 am to 1 pm.

[0047] While the match module 314, status module 310, profile module 312, and associated databases 320 and 322 are shown as being embodied within the central status device 202, in some embodiments, the match module 314, status module 310, profile module 312, and/or associated databases 320 and 322 may be embodied within one or more of the communication servers (e.g., servers 214, 216, 218, or 220). In these embodiments, the determination as to which agent 104 to forward the inbound communication to is performed by the communication server receiving the inbound communication.

[0048] The universal login module 316 is configured to universally log the agent 104 into all enabled agent communication devices 204 and systems associated with the agent 104 with a single login action. For example, if the agent 104 attempts to log into their e-mail system, the universal login module 316 will log the agent 104 into all other agent communication devices 204 and systems, such as for chat and voice calls, associated with the agent 104. Similarly, when the agent 104 logs out of one agent communication device 204 or system, the universal login module 316 will log the agent 104 out of all other agent communication devices 204 and systems. In alternative embodiments, the agent 104 does not need to log in, but merely indicates that they are present and working (e.g., turns on their computing device or punches in for work). In these embodiments, the universal login module 316, or similar module, notifies all associated communication servers of the presence of the agent 104. In various embodiments, once logged in, the agent 104 has an available status (i.e., communication status indicates no inbound communications being handled).

[0049] In some embodiments, the central status device 202 comprises a dedicated central server distinct from the communication servers of the call center 102. In other embodiments, one of the communication servers or agent communication devices 204 may function as the central status device 202. For example, the computing device 210 may function as the central status device 202. In this example, the computing device 210 will know the communication status of the agent 104 if the agent 104 is either responding to an e-mail message

or a chat message via the computing device 210. At the same time, the PBX server 214 will know the agent's status with respect to voice calls. If the computing device 210 is running software that is coupled to the PBX server 214 and allows the computing device 210 to obtain the communication status from the PBX server 214, then the computing device 210 will know the overall availability status for the agent 104 across all communication types and servers.

[0050] In an alternative example, the PBX server 214 may act as the central status device 202. In this example, the PBX server 214 will know the communication status of the agents 104 for voice calls. The computing device 210 of each agent 104 knows the status for e-mail and chat messaging, and communicates the communication status to the PBX server 214. Alternatively, the e-mail server 216 and the chat server 218 know the statuses of the agents 104 with respect to e-mail and chat messaging, and can communicate the communication statuses to the PBX server 214. As a result, the PBX server 214 knows the overall availability based on the communication statuses for the agents 104 across all communication types and servers.

[0051] FIG. 4 is a flowchart 400 of a process for universal login. In step 402, a login request from an agent 104 is received. The login request may comprise a user name and password for the agent 104. In exemplary embodiments, the login request is received directly by the universal login module 316. In alternative embodiments, the login request is received by one agent communication device 204 associated with the agent 104 and forwarded to the universal login module 316. For example, the agent 104 may send a login request to their e-mail system. The computing device 210 comprising the e-mail system, in the present example, will then send the login data/confirmation to the universal login module 316. Similarly, the PBX server 214, in a phone login case, will forward the login request to the universal login module 316.

[0052] Subsequently, the universal login module 316 will determine which communication servers to log the agent 104 into. In exemplary embodiments, the universal login module 316 may query the profile module 312 and/or profile database 320 to determine which communication devices are associated with the agent 104 logging in. The profile associated with the agent 104 will contain information as to which communication devices the agent 104 utilizes.

[0053] In step 406, the universal login module 316 forwards the login request to all appropriate communication servers based on the associated communication devices determined in step 404. As such, the login request may be forwarded to the communication servers 214, 216, 218 and/or 220. In alternative embodiments, the login request may be sent to each communication device associated with the agent 104. The communication device then individually logs the agent 104 in.

[0054] The universal login module 316 then receives one or more "success" flags in step 408. These flags confirm that the agent 104 is logged in with one or more communications server 214, 216, and/or 218. Thus, for example, the PBX server 214 will return a login "success" flag to the universal login module 316 to indicate the agent 104 is logged in with the PBX server 214.

[0055] In step 410, the logged in status of the agent 104 is forwarded to the status module 310. In some embodiments, the status module 310 may update the status in the status database 322. The agent 104 now is available to receive inbound communications.